
Elections

DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS

Mission

By conducting accurate, secure and accessible elections, we provide an opportunity for the people of King County to participate in their government.

ISSUES AND PRIORITIES

King County Elections (Elections) conducts regional elections, maintains jurisdiction and voter registration files, and provides election-related information to members of the public, media, stakeholders, and other government entities.

In February 2009, King County Elections became a separate department, led by the county's first elected Elections Director. Elections is staffed by 63 fulltime employees who have a strong sense of pride and commitment to the work they perform in serving a registered voter population of 1.1 million.

Elections has become an established and well respected leader within the elections community for its programs, outreach and education, accessible voting advocacy, and technological innovations. In 2010, the office intends to maintain operations while continuing to seek opportunities to address the following priority objectives:

- Meeting ever-changing customer needs,
- Expanding upon strategic partnerships,
- Managing internal resources to improve services, and
- Increasing voter education and outreach.

After more than three years of planning, King County successfully transitioned to countywide vote by mail in 2009, making King County the largest jurisdiction in the country to vote entirely by mail.

Working in collaboration with the executive and council, Elections has achieved success in providing open public processes with streamlined and efficient work procedures, implementing more than 300 reforms since 2004.

The Elections 2010 proposed budget includes requests for funds to support key strategic initiatives while being mindful of the General Fund's financial challenges. It also includes efficiencies gained through the implementation of mechanical and software systems designed to increase accountability and efficiency in our new all-mail environment.

With the completion of the presidential election cycle in 2008, and three successful countywide mail elections in 2009, King County Elections continues to mark achievements for accountability, open government, and security.

Early in 2009, the United State Corps of Engineers (USACE) discovered damage to the right abutment of the Howard Hanson Dam, which controls the release of flood waters into the Green River. To avoid the possibility of a complete failure of the dam, the USACE will restrict the amount of water retained by the dam and increase the release of water into the Green River during periods of heavy rain. This operational change has the potential to cause severe flooding in the Green River Valley. While the 2010 Executive Proposed Budget does not contain funding specifically for flood planning or response, the planning efforts are well underway. In mid-2009 the County Executive in consultation with the King County Council and the Elections Director decided to relocate the Election function from its location in the potential flood plain to the

Airport Operations Center (AOC) building at the King County International Airport to avoid disruptions in ballot counting following the November general election should a flood event occur. Elections is legally mandated to count the ballots and certify the results within three weeks of the election. The move commenced in September 2009. The 2010 costs for flood mitigation will be addressed in a separate supplemental appropriation request that will be submitted to the County Council this fall.

2010 Proposed Budget for Elections 0010/0535

Code	Item	Description	Expenditures	FTEs *	TLTs	
Program Area						
GG						
			2009 Adopted	18,030,757	62.00	8.00
			Status Quo**	(397,239)	0.00	0.00
			Status Quo Budget	17,633,518	62.00	8.00
			Contra Add Back	971,782		
Change in County Policy						
AS11	Recovering Prosecuting Attorney Services from Participating Jurisdictions	\$54,658	0	0.00	0.00	
			0	0.00	0.00	
Increased Efficiencies/Reduced Costs						
AS01	Motor Pool Reduction (\$9,161)		0	0.00	0.00	
AS04	Vote-By-Mail Project Team		(388,631)	0.00	(8.00)	
AS05	Mail Handling Reductions (\$13,069)		(19,274)	0.00	0.00	
AS06	Intermittent Employee Status Change (Adm) (\$2,785)		(7,164)	0.00	0.00	
AS07	Intermittent Employee Status Change (BPD) (\$13,920)		(35,820)	0.00	0.00	
AS08	Intermittent Employee Status Change (VS) (\$11,914)		(14,328)	0.00	0.00	
AS09	Voters' Pamphlet Printing and Distribution (\$1,875)		(125,000)	0.00	0.00	
CS10	OIRM Transfer (\$18,257)		124,306	1.00	0.00	
			(465,911)	1.00	(8.00)	
Operational Shutdown Savings						
CR45	Operational Shutdown Savings Contra		(256,568)	0.00	0.00	
			(256,568)	0.00	0.00	
Technical Adjustments						
TA01	Elections Equipment Replacement Setup		0	0.00	0.00	
TA50	Revenue Adjustment		0	0.00	0.00	
CR01	Flexible Benefits		(39,480)	0.00	0.00	
CR07	Technology Services Operations & Maintenance Charge		(376,228)	0.00	0.00	
CR08	Technology Services Infrastructure Charge		(6,343)	0.00	0.00	
CR09	Geographic Information Systems Charge		64,829	0.00	0.00	
CR10	Office of Information Resource Mgmt Ops Charge/Rebate		(6,320)	0.00	0.00	
CR11	Telecommunications Services		(49,373)	0.00	0.00	
CR12	Telecommunications Overhead		(16,339)	0.00	0.00	
CR13	Motor Pool Usage Charge		(20,362)	0.00	0.00	
CR14	Facilities Management Space Charge		(95,181)	0.00	0.00	
CR21	Debt Service Adjustment		1,425,213	0.00	0.00	
CR25	Financial Services Charge		60,573	0.00	0.00	
CR26	Retirement Rate Adjustment		(157,497)	0.00	0.00	
CR27	Industrial Insurance Rate Adjustment		(748)	0.00	0.00	
CR35	Underexpenditure Contra		(18,260)	0.00	0.00	
CR37	Facilities Management Strategic Initiative		293	0.00	0.00	
CR39	COLA Adjustment		(6,333)	0.00	0.00	
CR40	Merit Adjustment		(2,494)	0.00	0.00	
			755,950	0.00	0.00	
Total Change Items in 2010			33,471	1.00	(8.00)	
2010 Proposed Budget			18,638,771	63.00	0.00	

* FTEs do not include temporaries or overtime.

** This includes 2009 adopted, initial status quo, and proposed status quo increments. Under FTEs, annualization is included.

*** Please see Budget Transparency Section table at the end of the program plan pages for section information as identified in the Budget Transparency Ordinance No. 16445.

Elections

Department of Elections

The 2010 Executive Proposed budget for the Department of Elections is \$18,638,771 and includes funding for 63.00 FTEs.

Change in County Policy

Recovering Prosecuting Attorney Services from Participating Jurisdictions – \$54,658 Revenue. This proposal incorporates the cost of the Prosecuting Attorney's legal services in the costs to be recovered from 130 jurisdictions served by Elections. This change is consistent with county policy which requires full cost recovery for services provided to other jurisdictions.

Increased Efficiencies/Reduced Costs

Motor Pool Reduction – (\$9,161) Revenue. This is a proposal to reduce the department's Motor Pool usage to three vehicles and two cargo vans, sufficient to meet business needs. The reduction in motor pool expenditure is reflected in Fleet's motor pool rate, this change accounts for the corresponding revenue reduction in Election's cost recovery model.

Vote-by-Mail Project Team (VBM) – (\$388,631) / (8.00) TLTs. As the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) grant-funded Vote-by-Mail project ramps down, the department proposes a reduction of eight term-limited positions and associated office and administrative costs.

Mail Handling Reductions – (\$19,274) / \$13,069 Revenue. With the implementation of automated equipment, the hours associated with processing mail are reduced, which are partly offset by maintenance costs of \$31,194.

Intermittent Employee Status Change – Combined (\$57,312) / (\$28,618) Revenue.

Consistent with state law and county policy relative to staffing intermittent bodies of work, Elections proposes to convert eight half-time positions from part-time to intermittent status. Intermittent employees would be hired for the specific month they are needed at full-time and will receive county health benefits when in pay status.

Voters' Pamphlet Printing and Distribution – (\$125,000) / (\$1,875) Revenue. 2010 is an even numbered year in which the Office of the Secretary of the State coordinates production of the Voter's Pamphlet. Counties and the state pay a prorated share of the cost. The department proposes a one-time reduction of \$125,000. In 2011, the budget will need to increase to support local production, or an alternative production and distribution process will need to be developed.

OIRM Transfer – (\$124,306) / (\$18,257) Revenue / (1.00) FTE. This proposal transfers a Senior Application Developer position from the Office of Information Resource Management – Technology Services to Elections. This is consistent with the IT Reorganization goal of increased efficiency.

Operational Shutdown Savings

Operational Shutdown Savings Contra – (\$256,568). In the face of the severe fiscal challenges across all county funds, the 2010 Executive Proposed Budget includes savings assumptions in an effort to preserve direct services. For 2009, savings were achieved through the implementation of a ten-day building and/or operational closure program, resulting in labor furloughs. The 2010 budget is balanced across all funds assuming that a similar level of savings will be achieved in each agency based on the furlough eligible employees as was adopted for 2009, including 2009 County Council amendments. The specific details of the 2010 plan are still under development, and discussions with labor unions and individual agencies are on-going. Specific plans describing how the 2010 savings will be achieved will be transmitted to the County Council in the coming weeks. To the extent that savings, from labor or other expenses, cannot be fully achieved through

temporary and short term building and/or operational closures, the plan will describe additional programmatic reductions and the elimination of additional positions.

Technical Adjustments

Elections Equipment Replacement Setup – \$0. This net zero change adjusts the Elections equipment replacement budget to required 2010 needs, and adds a corresponding required savings line, as general fund departments are required to fund equipment replacement through savings.

Central Rate Adjustments – \$755,950. This series of adjustments captures the net effect of countywide charges and results in a \$755,950 increase in charges to Elections. The reductions reflect efficiencies created by Executive agencies to reduce the cost of services they provide to other county agencies. These changes reflect the County Executive's commitment to creating an efficient government and making administrative reductions before direct service reductions. The efforts of central rate agencies to reduce costs are integral to the County Executive's strategy to address the General Fund deficit, and benefit all county agencies. A net increase in central rates is reflected in the 2010 proposed budget. The most significant increase is in the Debt Service Adjustment, as 2010 begins the repayment schedule for debt service on the Earlington building.